

"A STRUCTURE OF



Photo by Korral Broschinsky



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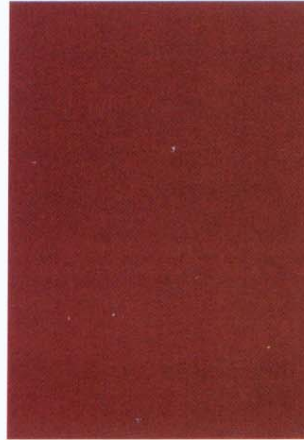


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On January 11, 2006, Cache County officials hosted a dedication and open house in the newly-renovated Cache County Courthouse on Logan's Main Street. Originally constructed in 1882-1883, the building is one of only a few nineteenth-century courthouses still used for government offices in Utah. Until recently, the future of the building was uncertain. After decades of remodeling and expedient maintenance, this grand dame of courthouses had not aged gracefully.

By Korral Broschinsky

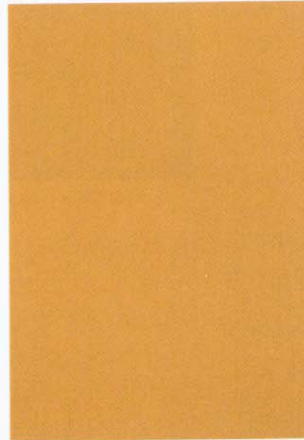
The building was targeted for demolition in early 2000 but was saved through the cooperative efforts of state and local officials, preservationists, and concerned citizens. After a two-and-a-half year, \$2.1 million renovation project, the historic courthouse now looks as fresh and lovely as a debutante. The title of an 1883 *Logan Utah Journal* article is as apt today as it was then, "The New Court House: A Structure of Which our County May Well be Proud."

"A Fine and Imposing Structure"

In 1881 Cache County selectmen approved a design for a new courthouse to replace a small frame building, which had served as office, repository, and jail since 1867. Truman O. Angell, Jr. was the architect for the building (see sidebar on page 45). On September 12, 1883, the *Utah Journal* published a lengthy description of the building as it neared completion. The reporter pronounced it "a fine and imposing structure."

The two-story brick building provided space for county offices on the main floor, court spaces on the second floor, and rooms for cells in the basement (though the jail was later built behind the courthouse.) Ceremonial spaces included the entrance hall, second-floor parlor, and a spacious courtroom which doubled as an auditorium. The reporter praised the building, declaring, "On the whole the court house is well adapted to the purposes for which it was built, its offices, apartments, etc. are large, light, airy and commodious, and will be finished and furnished in excellent style."

WHICH OUR COUNTY MAY WELL BE PROUD"



A "call to action" at a critical moment during a legislative session and the resulting community support were key to saving the historic Cache County Courthouse.

By 1905, the county government had outgrown the once ample courthouse. An addition was built on the west end, doubling the size of the facility. Expansion occurred again in 1917 with the addition of projecting wings at the northeast and southeast corners flanking the main entrance. The first threat of demolition came in 1938 when a building and trade organization suggested constructing a new courthouse as a way to stimulate employment. This proposal eventually died from lack of interest and funding.

A Sweet Old Lady in a Tattered Old Dress

As the county's population expanded after World War II, there were renewed calls for a new courthouse. However, building conditions were not favorable, and the county continued to repair and modernize with a new roof in 1947 and a coat of white paint in the 1950s. Inside, the large rooms were divided, the ceilings dropped with acoustic tile, and air conditioning units installed in the windows. While these changes addressed the needs of patrons and employees, they were made with little regard for the preservation of architectural features.

Beginning in the late 1960s, the courts system and several county offices were moved from the over-crowded historic courthouse. By the 1990s, the building had become, as one letter to the *Logan Herald Journal* described, "a sweet old lady in a tattered old dress." A quaint pioneer relic, it was a serviceable government building, but just barely. The "fine and imposing structure" had been modified into a labyrinthine, inaccessible nightmare with a history of leaky roofs, sewer backups, and electrical problems. With little money for renovation, county officials felt they had run out of options.

A Few Days in February

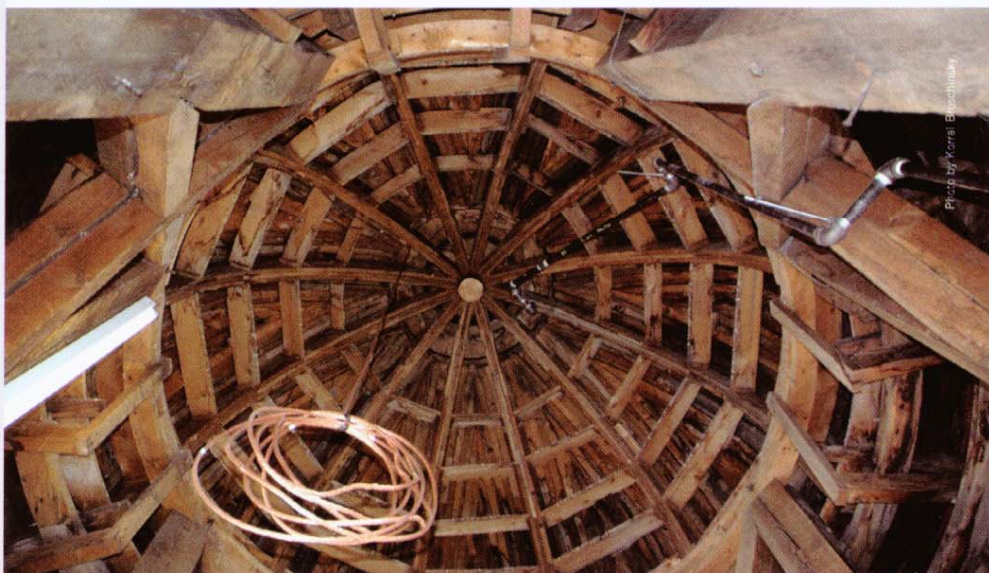
The moment of decision came in early February 2000. The Cache County Council agreed to a land swap with state courts so that a new courts facility could be built on the site of the historic courthouse. This proposal gave the county land for constructing a much-needed county administration building and passed the decision for demolishing the historic courthouse to state.



Dr. Newel Daines was a driving force in the Cache County Courthouse renovation.



Numerous insensitive alterations and years of deferred maintenance transformed the once-grand Cache County Courthouse into "a sweet old lady in a tattered old dress."



Contractors corrected a three-degree tilt in the courthouse's cupola.

As news of the trade appeared in the *Logan Herald Journal*, concerned citizens contacted the newspaper to express support for preserving the old courthouse. But demolition remained a strong possibility as an appropriations bill made its way through the state legislature. This bill tied funding for a new courts facility to the historic courthouse site.

When Utah Heritage Foundation (UHF) learned of the proposed land swap and appropriations bill, it mobilized resources to save the courthouse. UHF contacted State Representative Ralph Becker, a member of the appropriations committee, who confirmed that the State Courts Administration had only recently decided the old courthouse was the preferred site and had not fully considered the option of rehabilitation.

On Valentine's Day, UHF issued a "Call to Action" via the Internet, urging those interested in saving the courthouse to contact their legislators. The response was overwhelming. UHF Interim Executive Director Kirk Huffaker recalls, "UHF reached out to our members in Cache County and legislators immediately started hearing requests from their constituents to keep the historic courthouse and build the new courthouse somewhere else in downtown Logan."

Rep. Becker drafted language for the appropriations bill that allowed funding for the new courts facility to proceed without reference to the historic courthouse site. The new language passed in committee on February 16. The appropriations bill was later passed with language assigning responsibility for the site of the new courts building and the fate of the historic courthouse to local officials. The bill also included \$2.7 million to fund design work and the purchase of a site, giving the old courthouse a temporary reprieve.

At a meeting called by the Cache County Preservation Commission on February 17, local officials and preservationists met together to discuss options for the courthouse. They decided to undertake a feasibility study to investigate alternatives and cost projections for the seismic retrofit and renovation of the historic building.



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A Creative Solution

In late 2000, the feasibility study concluded that the courthouse could be renovated at a reasonable cost. The study also concluded that the best possible use for the building would be to continue as county office space. While reviewing the situation, Cache County officials noted the response to the proposed demolition had been overwhelmingly in favor of saving the courthouse. The majority of negative responses had not opposed to saving the building, but expressed concern about funding the project. Meanwhile, the courts decided to build at the corner of 100 West and 100 North, leaving the county to address its own space needs.

One part of the creative solution emerged as county administrators were planning to move the motor vehicle registration department from the old courthouse to the Wilkinson Supply Building just south of the courthouse on Main Street. In April 2001, former Logan mayor Dr. Newel Daines and his son, George, owners of the Wilkinson Building, presented a proposal to the Cache County Council suggesting their property be used for the construction of a new county administration building. In May, the Cache County Council accepted the proposal and made plans for a multi-phase building project that included the new building and renovation of the historic courthouse.

A year later, the county approved a bond to pay for a new jail and the administration building. The bond also provided \$1 million toward the restoration of the historic courthouse. In August 2003, after the county moved its offices into the new red brick administrative building, renovation of the old courthouse began in earnest.

A Collaborative Effort

The renovation project was a collaborative effort involving county officials, local preservationists, architect Lanny Herron of Architectural Nexus, and numerous sub-contractors and vendors, including Burton Lumber and Hardware, who supplied many of the building materials at cost.

More funding help came as Newel Daines stepped in to serve as fundraiser and unpaid renovation supervisor. Nearly \$1 million in additional funds were raised through private donations, including a generous grant from the George S. and Dolores Dore Eccles Foundation.

Accomplishing the seismic retrofit and providing ADA accessibility without compromising the historic integrity of the building were the most important components of the renovation. The National Trust for Historic Preservation provided Cache County a grant for a seismic study through the Utah Preservation Initiatives Fund in 2002. Based on the results of the study, the county employed Spindler Construction Company to install an interior frame of studs tied to the masonry and locked in place with four levels of horizontal diaphragm.

Contractors lowered the basement floor ten inches, reinforced the footings, and corrected the three-degree tilt of the cupola. Other ceilings were raised and lowered as needed to consolidate floor levels from five to three and provide space for the necessary mechanical, plumbing, and electrical systems. With the bulk of county offices in the



Mahogany finishes and Italian fabrics and furnishings adorn the ceremonial spaces in the renovated courthouse.



The restored 14.5-foot ceilings contribute to the grand feeling of the courthouse.



A new spiral staircase provides access to the cupola.

administration building, there was now room for a ADA accessible entrance on the south side of the building with access to an interior elevator.

The exterior was restored to its 1917 appearance. As years of paint were removed, the original contrasting sandstone and cast concrete emerged. The masonry was revealed to show the three colors of brick on the main building and the additions. The original 1882 portion of the building was constructed of buff-colored brick that had been stained red in the historic period. The decision was made to re-stain the brick to match the wings. Three types of foundation surfaces, long hidden under a coat of gray paint, are now distinct. A new portico was built on the west elevation to provide a secondary entrance from the main parking area.

Because few elements of the historic interior had been preserved through the years, a faithful recreation of the historic interior was not possible. Instead Daines and his team of designers and artisans focused on creating functional and ceremonial spaces inspired by the woodwork, carpets, and light fixtures of other historic buildings of the period. Fine craftsmanship is apparent throughout the building, from the mahogany finishes of the woodwork and cabinetry, to the marble counters and period tile in the restrooms. Many of the fabrics and furnishings were imported from Italy.

The building features many amenities, including a new spiral staircase to replace the long-missing access to the cupola. Metal screens hidden in box panels can be pulled out to secure the offices during evening council meetings. Concerned about obscuring the arched windows with horizontal blinds, Daines designed special hollow casings for the windows on the south and west elevations that hide the blinds when not in use.

A visitor familiar with the pre-renovation condition of the courthouse will be most impressed by the grand feeling of the space, from the 14.5-foot ceiling height to the number of uncluttered and impressively furnished nooks. While sitting at his desk in a corner office which once housed three-plus employees, Cache County Executive Lynn Lemon jokes, "It's true, we don't use the space as efficiently as we used to."



Photo by Korral Broschinsky

Metal screens hidden in box panels can be pulled out to secure offices during evening council meetings.



Photo by Korral Broschinsky

The renovated courthouse and new administration building consolidate county services in the heart of Logan's historic downtown.

A Credit to the County

Lynn Lemon is justifiably proud of what the county and its citizens have accomplished, far beyond the preservation and renovation of a deteriorating old building. Once located in five different buildings, all county offices and services are now consolidated in two buildings in the heart of Logan's downtown historic commercial district. Overall, the renovation project was a bargain thanks to Newell Daines and his family, private donations, and the many contractors and consultants who worked to keep costs down. The historic courthouse looks brand new and is a delight to residents and tourists alike. Mr. Lemon looks forward to hosting downtown events on the plaza between the courthouse and new administration building. The county is proud to be "a contributor in maintaining and keeping the downtown area vital," Lemon explains.

Once again dressed in her finery, this grand old lady is poised to serve Cache County for another hundred years with pride. As the anonymous writer in 1883 remarked, "It is a credit to [those] who built it, and to our county, and a structure of which our citizens may well be proud." *

Korral Broschinsky is an architectural historian living in Murray, Utah. She has worked on numerous projects in the Cache County, including a resurvey of the Logan Center Street Historic District in 1999.

Courtesy of State History



Truman O. Angell, Jr.

Truman Osborn Angell, Jr. is often confused with his famous father, Truman O. Angell, Sr., architect of the Salt Lake Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church). Truman Jr. was born in Salt Lake City on February 27, 1852, the son of Truman O. Angell (1810-1887) and Susan Eliza Savage (1825-1893). The son learned the architectural trade from his father. Truman O. Angell, Sr. served as official architect for the LDS Church. In 1867, Truman Angell, Jr., was appointed assistant for the LDS Church and in this capacity collaborated with his father and other architects on numerous Church buildings including the Salt Lake Temple and LDS Church tabernacles in Brigham City, Coalville, Logan, and Paris, Idaho.

Several sources credit Truman O. Angell, Jr. with the design of the Logan Temple. It was during a work stoppage at the temple site (due to lack of funds), that Cache County paid Truman O. Angell, Jr. \$150 for designs and specifications for the county courthouse. The temple construction crew followed the architect to provide labor for the courthouse construction. The Logan LDS Second Ward's United Order Manufacturing and Building Company completed the courthouse in the fall of 1883. Truman O. Angell, Jr. was also an accomplished musician and artist. He moved to Butte, Montana, in 1908, where he lived until he died on April 10, 1933.